



NEWT GINGRICH

To: U.S. House of Representatives Inspector General Mike Ptasienski

From: Newt Gingrich

Date: November 16, 2018

Subject: September 2016 Briefings to House Leadership and the Committee Regarding the IT Allegations Involving Imran Awan and his Associates

Dear Mr. Ptasienski,

As a former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and a concerned private citizen, I am alarmed by the appearance of a cover-up of serious crimes committed by a former House employee and his associates, as well as, potentially, members of the House of Representatives themselves.

I waited until after the election to send this letter so it clearly would not be seen as a political act.

To help reassure the American people that our nation's leaders stand for honesty, accountability, and transparency, this letter is a formal request to ask for the release of the two PowerPoint presentations given on September 20, 2016 and September 30, 2016 by your office to House leadership.

The presentations provide critical information pertaining to the possible invoice manipulation, equipment theft, illicit cyber activities, irregular cyber-related login and usage patterns, and outside storage of House data by Imran Awan and his associates.

The plea agreement for Mr. Awan, court appearances, and reported conversations with witnesses connected to the FBI's investigation of Awan and his associates' activities suggests that the FBI (while working with the United States Capitol Police) and the Department of Justice have avoided conducting a thorough and meticulous investigation.

For example, in the July 2018 plea agreement, the DOJ stated that approximately 40 witnesses were interviewed throughout the duration of the investigation. Upon further examination, this number seems substantially inadequate for an investigation potentially involving so many individuals. While employed by the House for 13 years as shared IT employees, the Awan associates worked for more than 60 members, and in 2015, 2016, and 2017, the Awan associates were on the payrolls of approximately 40 members each year. When taking into account the members, the staff of each member, fellow House IT colleagues and peers, and additional business associates, the 40 interviews that were conducted appear to be remarkably insufficient to support the argument that an investigation of this magnitude was conducted thoroughly.

In connection with the investigation, it has also been reported that key witnesses were only contacted days or hours before the plea agreement was signed. In another case, a witness was asked to be interviewed by the FBI but was prohibited from bringing any documents. Conducting investigative interviews in this manner suggests that the FBI investigators merely wanted to be able to say that they contacted witnesses and raises significant questions as to whether these interviews were actually conducted in good faith.

Aside from the alleged criminals themselves, this apparent collective effort of willful negligence sought to protect the involved members of Congress and their staffs – at the expense of the American people who they were entrusted to protect in the first place.

The sheer scale and size of the alleged criminal activity, the potential damage it could have caused, and the continual threats it potentially poses for the United States, raises significant questions that every American deserves to have answered.

In just one of the dozens of offices where one of the Awan associates were employed, almost \$120,000 worth of equipment was written off of the House inventory, after he was unable to produce the equipment. An unofficial transcript of your office's PowerPoint presentation from September 20, 2016 asserts that the "shared employee stated that the items were never received, shouldn't have been inventoried, or the staff lost the equipment." The flaw in this claim is emphasized by the transcribed statement that follows: "However, equipment could not be on inventory or have [an] asset tag unless it had arrive[d] in office and EIN had been signed."

The member of the office in question is a member of the Committee on Ethics.

Additionally, more than \$111,000 was paid by the House Democratic Caucus to one of the Awan associates throughout the duration of her employment. Members on the Committee of Foreign Affairs issued payments to associates totaling more than \$950,000. The Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence paid the associates over \$530,000, while the Committee on the Judiciary paid more than \$446,000. The Committee on Ethics paid more than \$221,000, and the Committee on Homeland Security paid upwards of \$175,000.

Close ties between Pakistan and the Awan associates were also identified, including large amounts of property that were owned but not properly disclosed in House documents. A \$165,000 home equity line of credit loan received in January 2017 was wired in its entirety – almost immediately – to two individuals in Faisalabad, Pakistan. Imran Awan pleaded guilty less than a month ago to obtaining this exact loan illegally.

These allegations and the accompanying investigation have been kept under such secrecy that the American people have been denied their fundamental right to know what happened, who is responsible, and what actions have been taken to ensure the fair and transparent administration of justice.

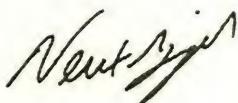
The American people expect better than this. The United States Congress should be better than this.

Releasing the requested documents is essential to show that the U.S. government will require every member of Congress to answer to his or her constituents and fellow citizens for his or her actions.

If you choose to deny this request, I will appeal to the House membership to pass a resolution that will make public the two documents, and all additional documents that are related to the claims made against and his associates, investigators and law enforcement, and the House members and staffers who may be involved.

Americans deserve truthful, complete answers to the questions that have been raised surrounding these extensive allegations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Newt Gingrich".

Newt Gingrich
Former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives